

Message Text

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ACTION PRS-01

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FM AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

TO AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BOGOTA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BRASILIA IMMEDIATE

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 437

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP(KISSINGER, HENRY A.) PFOR, GT

SUBJ: SECRETARY'S VISIT TO GUATEMALA

1. SUGGEST SECRETARY ALLUDE TO FOLLOWING ITEMS DURING NEWS CONFERENCE IN GUATEMALA. WIRE STORIES FROM WASHINGTON HAVE REFERRED TO U.S. ROLE IN OPENING ATLANTIC HIGHWAY, BUT WITHOUT THE SPECIFICS OF PARTICIPATION OF U.S. ARMY ENGINEER CORPS UNIT. LOAN STORY IS UNANNOUNCED. WE WILL HAVE HANDOUT IN PRESS KIT AS FOLLOWS:

2. QUOTE: ADDITIONAL U.S. EARTHQUAKE ASSISTANCE.

A. THE UNITED STATES IS BRINGING A U.S. ARMY ENGINEER REINFORCED COMPANY TO GUATEMALA TO HELP THE GOVERNMENT OPEN THE 50 MILE STRETCH OF THE ATLANTIC HIGHWAY BETWEEN GUATEMALA CITY AND EL RANCHO WHICH WAS BADLY DAMAGED IN THE EARTHQUAKE. THE ENGINEERS WILL ASSIST IN CLEARING THE HIGHWAY OF SLIDES, RESTORING THE ROADWAY WHERE IT HAS SUNK, AND BUILDING A TEMPORARY BRIDGE TO BYPASS THE ONE DESTROYED AT AGUA CALIENTE. THE HIGHWAY IS EXPECTED TO BE OPEN BEFORE THE ONSET OF THE RAINY SEASON IN MID-MAY. AFTER THAT THE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHWAYS, WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF PRIVATE CONSTRUCTION FIRMS, WILL MAINTAIN THE ROAD, INSTALL PERMANENT DRAINS, AND EVENTUALLY REBUILD THE BRIDGE AND PAVE THE ROAD. SOME OF THE ARMY ENGINEER PERSONNEL AND EQUIPMENT ARE SCHEDULED TO ARRIVE ON TWO C-141S FEBRUARY 25; THE BULK WILL ARRIVE IN PUERTO

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BARRIOS ON TWO LSTS FEBRUARY 29. ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT

(CHIEFLY TRUCKS) WAS KEPT IN GUATEMALA FOR THE ATLANTIC HIGHWAY PROJECT WHEN THE U.S. ARMY FIELD HOSPITAL, WHICH OPERATED IN CHIMALTENANGO IN THE DAYS IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE EARTHQUAKE, WAS WITHDRAWN LAST WEEK.

B. PRESIDENT FORD TRANSMITTED A BILL TO CONGRESS FEBRUARY 19 FOR AN EMERGENCY GRANT AUTHORIZATION OF \$25,000,000 WHICH WILL BE USED TO CONTINUE HELPING VICTIMS OF THE EARTHQUAKE. THE NEW AUTHORIZATION INCLUDES THE \$3.7 MILLION ALREADY COMMITTED BY THE ASSISTANCE WILL GO TO REPAIR HOUSING, PUBLIC SERVICES AND TRANSPORTATION IN RURAL AREAS WHERE MORE THAN 150,000 FAMILIES LOST THEIR HOMES.

BREAKDOWN.

BREAKDOWN OF THE COSTS FOLLOWS:

7.5 MILLION-FOR INITIAL EMERGENCY RELIEF OPERATIONS

7.5 MILLION-FOR REPAIR OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES (SCHOOLS, MARKETS, HEALTH POSTS)

7.5 MILLION-TO RESTORE TRANSPORTATION LINKS, INCLUDING THE ATLANTIC HIGHWAY

2.5 MILLION-FOR OTHER URGENT ENGINEERING AND CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS ARISING FROM TOPOGRAPHICAL CHANGES WROUGHT BY THE EARTHQUAKE(FORMATION OF LAKES BY LANDSLIDES)

C. THE UNITED STATES AND GUATEMALA WILL SIGN A PREVIOUSLY AUTHORIZED SMALL FARMER DEVELOPMENT AID LOAN FEB 25 FOR \$13,000,000(PLUS A GRANT OF \$1.8 MILLION) TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE AND INCREASE INCOMES OF THE RURAL POOR IN THE HIGHLANDS AREA OF GUATEMALA. THE LOAN CALLS FOR LAND IMPROVEMENT THROUGH SMALL SCALE IRRIGATION PROJECTS, CONTOUR PLOUGHING AND OTHER CONSERVATION METHODS; IT WILL OPEN NEW LANDS IN NORTHERN GUATEMALA FOR RESETTLING UP TO 5,000 FAMILIES. THE LOAN ALSO CALLS FOR LABOR INTENSIVE CONSTRUCTION OF ACCESS ROADS AND A PROGRAM TO STRENGTHEN SECTOR PLANNING AND MANPOWER DEVELOPMENT IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE. GOG WILL CONTRIBUTE \$6 MILLION FOR AN OVERALL PROJECT TOTAL OF \$19 MILLION. END QUOTE.

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3. PRESS KIT WILL ALSO INCLUDE FULL SUMMARY OF EARLIER U.S. ASSISTANCE.
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Message Attributes

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